



U.S. Department of Justice

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## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **District man found guilty of conspiracy, obstruction of justice, threats to witnesses, and firearms and drug offenses**

WASHINGTON - On May 26, 2009, a 33-year-old District of Columbia man, Robert F. Gaulden, was found guilty by a Superior Court jury of conspiracy, obstruction of justice, threats to witnesses, and firearms-related offenses, U.S. Attorney Jeffrey A. Taylor announced today.

Specifically, the jury found Gaulden guilty of Conspiracy to Obstruct Justice, five counts of Obstruction of Justice, three counts of Threats to kill or harm witnesses, Unlawful Possession of a Firearm by a Convicted Felon, Carrying a Pistol without a License, Possession of an Unregistered Firearm, Unlawful Possession of Ammunition, and Unlawful Possession of Marijuana. Sentencing is scheduled for September 29, 2009, before the Honorable Robert Morin, who presided over the trial.

The government's evidence at trial showed that on June 22, 2006, around 8:40 p.m., the defendant exited a vehicle parked near 641 46<sup>th</sup> Street, SE, Washington, D.C. At the time he exited the vehicle, the defendant was holding a 9mm semi-automatic pistol with an extended magazine containing approximately 30 rounds of ammunition, and there was marijuana in the car. Police gave chase, and the defendant ran into an apartment building at 641 46<sup>th</sup> Street, SE, and ditched the gun in an apartment belonging to a third-party before escaping. The defendant was arrested approximately three months later in connection with an unrelated incident.

A trial on the gun and drug offenses was held in February 2008. Several weeks before the start of the trial, the defendant's associate approached a government witness in an effort to interfere with that witness's truthful testimony at trial. That witness ultimately testified at the February 2008 trial. In addition, two additional civilian witnesses testified at trial that they observed the defendant running from the police on June 22, 2006. The jury did not reach a verdict in the February 2008 trial, and a new trial was scheduled.

Shortly thereafter, in March 2008, the defendant approached a friend of one of the civilian witnesses and threatened to kill not only the friend, but also the two civilian

witnesses who testified against him. The defendant then attempted to get the friend to persuade one of the witnesses to change her testimony. The defendant also wrote two letters to family members in an attempt to interfere with the truthful testimony of witnesses at trial. These letters were discovered by law enforcement during an unrelated search of a vehicle in June 2008.

In announcing the jury's verdict, U.S. Attorney Taylor commended the efforts of the Metropolitan Police Department officers who were involved in the investigation and prosecution of this case. Specifically, the U.S. Attorney commended the outstanding work of the following MPD officers: Detectives Douglas Carlson, Paul Regan, Earl Delauder, and Toni Patterson who investigated the obstruction and threats to government witnesses; Narcotics and Special Investigation Division Officers James Boteler, Charles Fultz, Dino McFadden, Alvin Cardinal, Detective Steven Manley and Sgt. GG Neill, who investigated the firearms and drug offenses; and Crime Scene Search Officer Salome Wilson. The U.S. Attorney further commended the outstanding work of FBI agents Daniel Sparks and Scott Turner who located the letters written by the defendant, as well as forensic document examiner Richard Williams of the U.S. Secret Service, who conducted a handwriting analysis of the letters seized by the FBI with known samples from the defendant. U.S. Attorney Taylor also cited the efforts of several members of his staff, including the Witness Security section of the Victim Witness Assistance Unit, especially Shawn Slade, Michael Hailey, and M. Laverne Forrest who handled numerous witness security issues; Litigation Support Services; former intern Susan Royer; paralegal Kelly Blakeney; Assistant U.S. Attorneys Courtney Saleski and Michelle Jackson, who assisted in the investigation of this case; Assistant U.S. Attorney Amy Zubrensky, who investigated and indicted this case; and Assistant U.S. Attorneys Jennifer Kerkhoff and Alex Little, who presented the government's case at trial.

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